nature net

The NatureKenya Newsletter * www.naturekenya.org * February 06

FUNDAMENTALS OF ORNITHOLOGY

A Certificate course for bird guides and birders
Elsamere Field Studies Centre, Lake Naivasha
20– 27 April 06

This is a popular week-long course in field ornithology designed for amateur and professional bird guides and birdwatchers who want to improve their understanding of birds and their birding skills in the field. Teaching is through illustrated lectures, discussion sessions, group seminars, demonstrations and field practicals, in an informal environment. Participants completing the course to the satisfaction of the instructors receive a Certificate in Ornithology.

Fees and application:
Ksh 25,000 per person (US$400 non resident rate), which includes full board accommodation, transport to and from Naivasha town, and during field outings, course materials and equipment.

Applicants must have some birding experience, at least KCSE level of education (a short CV required with application). A non-refundable deposit of 12,500/- (or US$200) must accompany applications (balance to be paid by 7 April). Only 18 places available - book now!

Applications and inquiries, should be addressed to: Anthony Kuria, Course Coordinator, at the Nature Kenya contacts or
email tba-africa@tropical-biology.org

IN THE FIELD

active update

Hippo Camp, Naivasha
Sat 18 February '06

Take a walk alang the shores af Lake Naivasha, at this Kenya Wildlife Service campsite.

We shall car paol and affers af rides are mast appreciated. If yau secure a ride please be prepared ta contribute.

Cast: 250/- Including ranger fee
Not included KWS fees (Kenya citizens 100/-, children 50/-, cash nat smartcard) Baok with Nature Kenya by **Tues 14 Feb '06**.

Alsa bring hat, water, picnic lunch and meet at the Nairabi Museum car park at 7:00 a.m!

Camping at Kingwal Swamp (Kapsabet)
Fri 24 - Sun 26 March '06

Birds, Sitatungas, Chepkiit Falls and Keben springs are the attractions af this field trip.

The cost af 3000/- per persan includes faad, transpart and camping fees (there is a discaunt if using yaur awn vehicle).

Please bring sleeping bag, plate, cup and spaan and meet at the Museum car park at 8:00 a.m.

Baok with the Nature Kenya affice by Fri 17 March '06.

SHOP & SUBS

For your membership renewals, books, maps and guidebooks!

The prefab building, which houses the shop and subscription desk, may now be accessed using the same entrance as that of the Nairobi Botanic Garden. Follow the signs to the Snake Park and we are enroute. KARIBU!

* MANGROVE HONEY FROM ARAKOKE SOKOKE FOREST BACK IN STOCK @ 200/-

* DON'T FORGET YOUR EAGLE LAPEL PIN @ 100/-

THIS IS THE TREE
A Story of the Baobab
By Miriam Moss and Adrienne Kennaway

Visit the prefab shop for a new and exciting set of children's books!

FEBRUARY AT A GLIMPSE

Sat 11	Tree Walk
Sat 18	Hippo Camp outing
Sun 19	Sunday Birdwalk
Man 27	Tree Walk
Birdwalks every Wednesday Morning	
Bird ringing every Thursday Marning	

Editorial Team
Editor Catherine Ngarachu
Evening Skies Fleur Ng'weno
Naturalist's Corner Dino Martins

AVIAN FLU

HIGH RISK FARMING PRACTICES SPREADIND AVIAN FLU?

action

World health and veterinary authorities are worried about outbreaks of avian influenza type H5N1 in eastern Asia and Turkey. This is a disease of chickens and other domestic poultry, with a high mortality rate. It also occasionally affects wild birds and even people. H5N1 has not been reported in Kenya, but the threat is still very real and precautions should be taken.

BirdLife INTERNATIONAL

Together for birds and people

Dr Richard Thomas, BirdLife International's Communications Manager says, that wild birds are victims not vectors of H5N1 bird flu: 'When plotted, the pattern of outbreaks follows major road and rail routes, not flyways. And the absence of outbreaks in Africa, South and South-East Asia and Australasia at end 2005 is hard to explain, if wild birds are the primary carriers.'

BirdLife maintains better biosecurity is the key to halting the spread of bird flu. In particular, BirdLife is urging governments and relevant agencies to concentrate their efforts on the poultry and cage bird trades and to ban the movement of poultry and poultry products.

BirdLife is also strongly urging governments to ban the use of untreated poultry faeces as fertiliser and feed in fish-farms and in agriculture. Domestic bird waste is widely used as food and fertiliser in fish farming and in agriculture, yet infected poultry are known to excrete virus particles in their faeces.

The use of untreated faeces in fish farming was recently described by the United Nation's Food and Agriculture Organization as a 'high risk production practice'. Such practices also include the farming of multiple species of animals, including poultry and waterfowl, within one farm unit; the keeping of chickens over fish ponds; the use of untreated chicken faeces as fertilizer or livestock feed...' The current advice on the FAO website warns: 'the feeding of poultry manure/poultry litter should be banned in countries affected by or at risk from avian influenza, even if correctly composted, ensiled or dried with heat treatment." Manufacture and movement of fertiliser and feed in which the virus remains infective could be a very effective way of spreading H5N1 over long distances.

South Korea and Japan are two countries to have suffered outbreaks of H5N1 in poultry and wild birds following importation of infected duck meat. Both countries stamped the virus out by culling infected poultry around disease areas, and imposed strict controls on poultry and poultry meat imports.

'Neither country has suffered a recurrence of the virus despite the influx each autumn of hundreds of thousands of wild migrant birds,' Richard Thomas points out.

'But the virus can rapidly mutate, so it's important to monitor wild bird populations to look for evidence of new strains arising.'

"The case against wild birds looks flimsy indeed. Few would disagree that better biosecurity is the key to halting the disease's spread." —Dr Richard Thomas. BirdLife International

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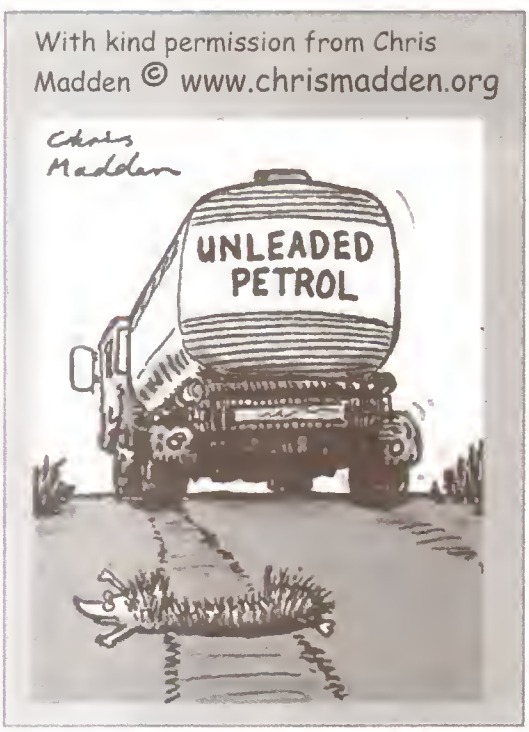


DEEP FREEZING

FOR THE WORLD'S FOOD PLANTS

A mossive deep freezer is being hewn out of rock in o mountoin in Norway. This lorge concrete room will be stocked with somples of seeds from all of the world's crops.

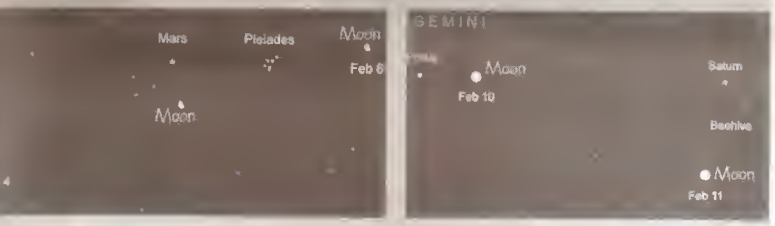
It is being built as an initiotive to safeguord the world's food supply against nuclear wor, climote chonge, terrorism, rising seo levels, eorthquokes and ony other unforeseen disosters. 'If the worst come to the worst, this would ollow the world to reconstruct ogriculture on this plonet,' soys Cory Fowler, director of the Globol Crop Diversity Trust thot is behind the project.

Locoted in the frigid, remote, northern port of the country, the seedbonk voult will be built deep inside o sondstone mountoin lined with permofrost on the Norwegion Arctic island of Spitsbergen. The walls will be obout o metre thick made of solid concrete ond the entire focility will be bomb-proof, with total protection, even from nucleor explosions!

With over o quorter of o million species of flowering plants currently described, the importance of seed banks for conserving ond protecting plant genetic resources connot be understoted. Thousonds upon thousonds of plonts ore used doily by humonkind across the world. However, in mony ploces these plonts ore declining or even becoming extinct due to deforestotion, destructive ogriculturol practices ond the breokdown of traditional societies in the face of globolisotion.

The Globol Crop Diversity Trust initiotive is supported by the Norwegion government ond a number of countries ond institutions hove olready indicoted their support for this project. For more informotion on this project ond on seedbanks in generol, pleose visit the project through following websites:

www.startwithoseed.org
www.croptrust.org



EVENING SKY

Ian Mackay & Fleur Ng'weno

FEBRUARY 2006

Moon Feb 5th - First Quarter; Feb13th - Full Moon; Feb 21st - Last Quarter; Feb 28th - New Moon;

Stars Look high in the east after sunset to see the brightest star in the night sky. This brilliant, sparkling star is Sirius. The second brightest star, Canopus, is below Sirius and to the south.

The constellation of Orion, the Hunter or Warrior, is directly overhead. Three bright stars in a row form Orion's belt, and three fainter stars in a row are his sword. Four bright stars mark Orion's shoulders and knees. The English names of many stars and constellations come from the legends of ancient Greece.

East of Orion is the bright star Procyon. North of Procyon (in the northeast) are two bright stars together: the twins, Gemini.

Beyond Orion in the north is the reddish star Aldebaran, and beyond that the Pleiades or Seven Sisters. The bright star Capella is further north (lower in the sky). Some of the star names also come from ancient Arab and Roman astronomers.

The Milky Way, a broad pale band made up of millions and millions of stars, runs across the sky from southeast to northwest. The Milky Way passes between Sirius and Procyon, touches Betelgeuse on Orion's shoulder and continues past Capella and the letter "M" shape of Cassiopeia.

The constellation of Leo rises in the east. One of its stars, Regulus, is the bright star directly above the full moon of February 13th.

Planets Mars is the orange light high overhead; the Pleiades cluster is nearby. It is slowly moving towards the west to reach the horizon sometime in early September, after passing through the constellations of Taurus, Gemini, Cancer, Leo and Virgo. Mars is 2 degrees south of the moon on the 5th.

Saturn rises in the east at about sunset and is in the sky all night. It is following a similar path to Mars, but Saturn is slowly gaining on Mars and finally catches up in early June. In February, Saturn is just south of the almost full moon of the 11th.

The bright planets Venus and Jupiter are now in the morning sky, Jupiter high above and Venus low in the east. Venus is especially bright around February 17th.

CLASSIFIEDS

Reach over 1000 members by advertising in Nature Net Rates for Classifieds: • Up to 25 words 250/- • Up to 50 words 500/- Ads • @ 1750/- • with image +500/-

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bvwilliams@swiftkenya.com
CAROLE HEMMINGS 0733 747865
carole@access350.co.ke

ANNABELLE HOUSE

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Ksh 1,000 in private room bed & breakfast
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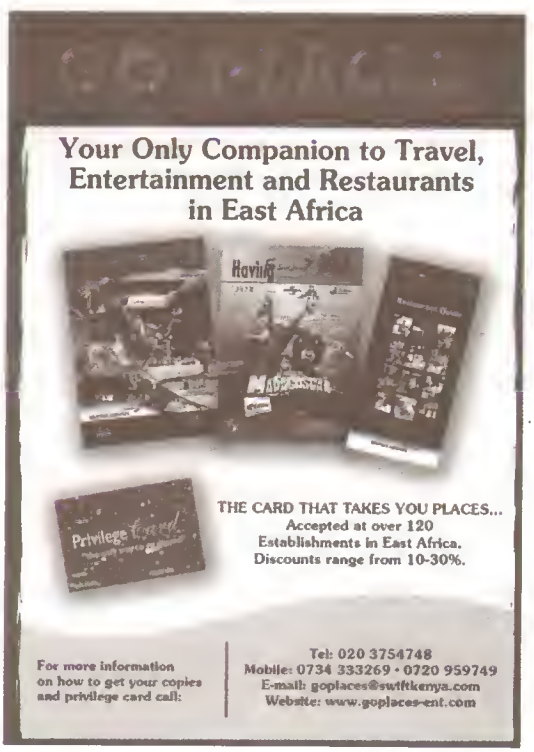
Ksh 1,500 full board in private room.
Ksh 300 for camping, bring own camping gear.
Self-catering allowed.

For more information and bookings please contact Lydia on 0722781202 or Jessica on 0721848223.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Up & about

DECLARATION

Nature Kenya does not accept any responsibility whatsoever in respect of negligence of any of its staff, volunteers or members organising the outings/trips or for any loss, injury, death or damage to property.

WEDNESDAY MORNING BIRDWALKS

Bird watching walks at sites in ond oround Noirobi. Meet at the National Museum car park every Wednesday at 8:45 a.m. Return obout 12:30 p.m. *Those who are not members can get temporary membership at Ksh 100 per birdwalk, payable on arrival at the car park.*

TREE WALKS

Guided tree walks in the Arboretum on the second Saturday and last Monday, i.e. **11** and **27 February '06** from 9:30 a.m. Meet at the Arboretum gate. *Those who are not members of FONA or Nature Kenya pay Ksh 100/- fee on arrival at the gate.*

SUNDAY BIRDWATCH

Members meet at the National Museum, Nairobi car park at 9:00 a.m. the third Sunday of every month, **i.e. 19 February '06.** The members decide where to go. Bring lunch

BIRD RINGING

Meet at the Museums' Nairobi Botanic Garden, at 7:00 a.m. every Thursday.

KINANGOP GUEST HOUSE

Perched on the Kinongop Plateau with incredible views ocross the Rift Valley, the farm combines tussock-grass pasture, indigenous forest, and attractive gardens. The guesthouse is comfortable and fully furnished. Visitors can enjoy hikes and walks on the farm or go further ofield with local guides.

For more information, brochure and non-member rates please contact Nature Kenyo. Guest House rates: Doy visit 350/-

MEMBER nos	Overnight	Weekend
1 to 2 pax	4000/-	6500/-
3 pax	4,900/-	7,400/-
4 pax	5,800/-	8,300/-

20% OFF AT THE DRIFTWOOD BEACHCLUB

On presentotion of your membership card, you con get 20% discount (if paying by cash or cheque) at the Driftwood Beachclub. This is o charming beachfront property with greot food and service. Contoct Driftwood Beachclub <driftwood@swiftmalindi.com> or tel 042 20155

Ngong Road Forest Walks

Ngong Rood Forest Sanctuory Trust nature walks held the first and third Saturdays of the month i.e. **4 & 18 February '06, at 9:00 a.m.** Meet ot the stoirs leading to the Restaurant ot the Racecourse. Call Anthony Chalo to confirm on 575207 or 0733 712406.

Lake Victoria Sunset Birders (Kisumu)

The Lake Victoria Sunset Birders organise bird walks at sites in and oround Kisumu every Friday of the month. For further details call 057 42952 or 0734 994938 or email lokevictoriosunsetbirders@yahoo.co.uk

Mt Kenya Biodiversity Conservation Group (MKBCG)

The MKBCG organise bird walks to sites around Naro Moru every last Saturday of the month i.e. **25 February '06.**
For more information contoct 0722 364904, 0733 937115 or 062 62071 Email: mt_kebio@yahoo.co.uk_

*New!! Birding at Kinangop

Friends of Kinongop Plateau organise birdwalks every third Fridoy of the month i.e. **17 February '06** at 9:00 a.m around Magumu and Njambini areas. To participate contact Bakari Ng'ang'a on 0721 470215

MARURA NAROK BIRDWATCHERS

A community group neor Uaso Narok Swamp, Rumuruti, which orgonises birdwalks every lost Saturdoy *i.e.* **25 February '06**. Call 062 32718 or email olmoisor@africaonline.co.ke

ARABUKO-SOKOKE (COAST)

The Saturday birdwatch with the Arabuko Sokoke Forest Guides Association is on the first Saturday of each month i.e. **4 February '06, at 6:30 a.m.** from the Visitor Centre, Gede. Cost 100/- per person. KWS fees now opply (100/- Citizens, 500/- Residents)

FFJ Bird Walk (Coast)

Friends of Fort Jesus birdwolks are held the third Saturday of each month, i.e. **18 February '06**.Please call Marlene Reid on (041) 491 648 to confirm

NatureKenya

Yes! *Start* *Renew*
my Nature Kenya membership

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Succulenta East Africa	400	
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Single - 400/-, Student - 250/-, School or Club - 800/-		
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OONATE & ***Help us to do even more!***	5000/Other	
Total		

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